

Darebin Community Engagement Policy

Workshop Notes and Drop-In Engagement Summary





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Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Participation	4
3.	Online workshops	5
١	Workshop:	5
ı	Purpose of the workshop	5
,	Acknowledgement of Country and introductions	6
ı	Purpose of workshop and check in of current views and knowledge	6
(Overview of why Council is developing a Community Engagement Policy and its contents	7
ı	Discussion of successful community engagement, engagement principles and practices	7
	Topic 1: Importance:	7
	Topic 2-Getting involved:	8
	Topic 3: Successful community engagement	10
	Topic 4: Council's community engagement principles and commitment	12
(Other ideas and feedback	13
4.	Place-based drop in engagements	14
(Overall drop-in participation	14
ı	Pop-Up 1	14
ı	Pop-Up 2	17
ı	Photos	19
5.	Children's Workshops	20
ı	Purpose of the workshops:	20
,	Activity 1 - Setting the scene (Local Government)	20
,	Activity 2 – What do you love about Darebin?	22
,	Activity 3 - Engaging children in your neighbourhood	23
,	Activity 4 - Mayor for the Day (putting engagement to the test)	25
1	Activity 5 – One word	25





1. Introduction

ChatterBox Projects was engaged by Darebin City Council to plan and facilitate one online workshop, two place-based drop-in engagements and two children's workshops to seek feedback on the draft Darebin Community Engagement Policy. This engagement was complimentary to Council's online feedback survey which was available via Councils Your Say page (https://www.yoursaydarebin.com.au/communityengagementpolicy)

This document outlies the results of these engagement activities only and does not include the results of the online survey or the hard copy surveys completed at place-based drop in events.

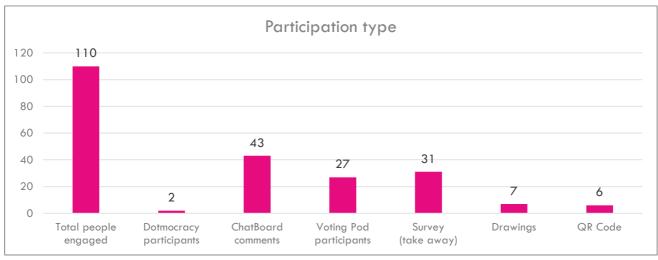
Table 1: Community engagement activities

Engagement type	Date	Time	Location		
Place-based drop-in 1 Saturday 16 January		1:00pm-4:00pm	All Nations Park, Northcote		
Place-based drop-in 2 Sunday 17 January		12:0pm-3:00pm	Edwardes Lake Park, Reservoir		
Online workshop 1	Tuesday 19 January	5:00pm-6:30pm	Online		
Children's workshop 1 Thursday 21 January		10:30am-12:00pm	Bundoora Children's Farm		
Children's workshop 2	Thursday 21 January	2:00pm-3:30pm	Kingsbury Primary School Holiday Program		

2. Participation

Approximately 150 people were engaged via these activities including:

- 12 Online Community Leaders workshop participants
- 30 Children's workshop participants
- 120 people engaged during the place-based drop in events.







3. Online workshops

Workshop: Tuesday, 19 January, 5pm to 6.40pm

Workshop Facilitator: Sam Walsh from ChatterBox Projects

Workshop Co-facilitator/Note taker: Robyn Cochrane from Cochrane Research Solutions

Panelist: Sarah-Jade Chung

Purpose of the workshop

 Gather feedback on the proposed Community Engagement Policy including feedback on the principles and commitments to the community and identify any gaps in the proposed policy.

- Discuss what successful community engagement looks like to the community.
- Discuss how the community wants Council to engage and communicate with them for future projects.
- Determine what topics the community would most likely participate in.
- Gain insights into participants experience with community engagement at Darebin.





Acknowledgement of Country and introductions

The online workshop was delivered using the Zoom platform and the Poll Everywhere engagement tool. Sam welcomed participants, presented the Acknowledgement of Country and then participants introduced themselves. Participants were invited to test the interactive engagement tools by answering a question "What do you love about Darebin?" Responses below:

- Creeks
- Close to city
- Connected community
- Multi-cultural community
- Bikes
- Progressive
- A compassionate community
- Multicultural Multi-faith
- The city Council is very inclusive

- Liveable
- Neighbourhood houses
- Green spaces
- Diversity of people
- Friendly
- Creative community
- The great food choices
- very friendly people

Purpose of workshop and check in of current views and knowledge

Sam outlined the purpose of the workshop. Participants were invited to answer four short questions via a poll:

Questions	Participant responses	
Have your read the Community	Yes-1	
Engagement policy?	No other responses	
How much do you know or	I know a lot-2	
understand about community	I have a good idea-6	
engagement and consultation?	A little bit-3	
	I know quite a bit-1	
How many times have you	None-2	
provided feedback in the past	1-5 times-6	
two years?	6-10 times-2	
	Over 10 times-3	
How satisfied are you with the	Very unsatisfied-0	
way Council consults with the	Unsatisfied-6	
community now?	Neutral-2	
	Satisfied-4	
	Very satisfied-1	





Overview of why Council is developing a Community Engagement Policy and its contents

Sam outlined why Council was developing a Community Engagement Policy, referred to the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 and explained what has happened to date. The draft Policy document was scrolled through participants had an opportunity to comment and ask questions. There was some discussion about genuine level of influence and how it varies by project. It is important to be clear and transparent and distinguish the type of engagement – consultative and deliberative.

Discussion of successful community engagement, engagement principles and practices

Participants were invited to identify and discuss what successful community engagement looks like before coming back to the principles and commitments to see if they agree and if there are any gaps.

Topic 1: Importance:

What is important to you when you participate in a consultation or engagement activity with Council? Why?

- There is something to influence, not tokenistic
- I have a voice and people care about me
- That they listen and do not come from "this is already decided but we have to do it anyway"
- Honesty, transparency and genuine community engagement
- Council should not say hard to reach but contact those who are hardly reached
- A well thought of framework that has been well planned
- Structured engagement
- That messages are heard and taken on board
- Transparency means that Council comes to the table with a genuine desire to listen
- That people have an opportunity to get involved that they even know about it and can understand it and respond
- Honesty, transparency and genuine community engagement
- That my ideas are taking seriously and influence the Council decision making
- Not only the loudest voices are heard
- That it has real impact otherwise it's a waste of time
- That I will be considered
- That the process has integrity and isn't just for the articulate or educated
- How do you make sure that people with disabilities, LGTB or other minorities groups are included in these communities
- Consultation is great but what is the yardstick for tipping the process over to deliberative is that budget?
- That there is ongoing access to the decision makers beside just the Council meetings
- Gives room and credence to those that don't agree and allows for health debate





Transparency: What does this mean to you? Is it knowing what you can influence or shown through reporting back?

- Two way conversation
- That I will be considered
- That it is genuine, calling back, feeling heard
- That the process has integrity and isn't just for the articulate or educated
- Not a tick the box exercise
- Reach out to diversity, disadvantaged, those with disabilities, communicating beyond middle class – empower their engagement
- That there is ongoing access to the decision makers beside just the council meetings
- Gives room and credence to those that don't agree and allows for health debate

What do you think is important for you to be consulted on?

- Urban development and planning
- Accessibility in the main issue, not only wheel-chairs pram, ageing mobility devices
- Projects that will be used by the community
- Art programs consulted with refugees if intended for those people?
- We need look at all communities at one family based on humanity more than politics
- Also include the voices of Children, WE ALWAYS FORGET our youth and children
- Women's Health
- Council needs to get out to markets, festivals, events and ask people
- Projects that will ultimately be used by community members
- Multicultural and Multi-faith
- Urban development and planning
- Anything that has a direct on residents.
- CALD
- Health and well being
- Interculturalism matters
- Refugees and Koori communities
- Accessibility
- Transport
- Young families, look after the young

Topic 2-Getting involved:

How would you like to hear about opportunities to provide your feedback and ideas?

- No local newspapers, how to get the word out, challenges with COVID-19
- Reality is not everyone uses social media or specific platforms,





- Email and Darebin Facebook Page
- I would like senior groups and CALD groups to be contacted directly, phones still exist.
- Visit groups
- Community newsletter
- People without social media have no way to get information or to be consulted
- Local paper limited print run, collect from local shop
- Community radio
- Publications in different languages, advertisement, insert (India link some are national)
- A booth set up at local shopping areas has proven to be the most successful for us
- Also they could update the website, it is a battle to find any information
- Use current CALD networks and translations
- A booth set up at local shopping areas has proven to be the most successful for us
- Some cannot read and write English or another language
- Also use internal sources like Inclusion and Diversity Team, Healthy Ageing, etc.
- Phone calls!!
- Please use neighbourhood houses more to communicate opportunities! We've got the people!
- Health Centres, Vaccination centres, etc.
- Visit groups. Seniors, CALD, Neighbourhood Houses (time consuming yes)
- Options to respond not online.
- Council publications, social media like Facebook, Twitter, websites, emails, notice /flyers when payments are made in Council foyer
- Billboards and posters at local shopping strips with a QR code
- People without social media have no way to get information or to be consulted
- Faith Networks to be contacted
- Finding out about the events and day to day life.
- And Council should take ownership by stating hardly reached rather than hard to reach
- Community Connectors database.
- Dr Carolyn Wallace research in this subject. She now works with Merri Health
- How do they choose those diverse groups, I suppose it is up to the relevant staff person.

What are the barriers to you or a family member in participating in a Council community engagement or consultation?

- Physical or language barriers
- Finding out about the events and day to day life.
- Time
- Judgement and perceptions
- Application process to access consultation can be difficult
- Language used to encourage or discourage participation
- People who have come from different situations
- Example "Prevention of family violence" changed to "Unite for safety and respect"
- Sensitivity of the demographics we live within and language





- My friend runs an Iranian FB page and most of the people post in Farsi, so I would say language.
- Not many ways to contribute (restrictive times/dates/locations) and not much clarity about the impact of my response
- "Dear vs favour, Reward vs punishment"
- People who have come from different situations are afraid to speak up, stand out
- Trust
- "Language Faith Perceptions"
- The application process to be part of a consultation can be quite complex
- Never seem to find out about it
- Need information translated
- The challenge seems to be that with community consultation the Council has to be all things to all people and it can be challenging in such a diverse community. We understand and know the cultures
- Even when Council serves food, it should not just be scones and tea, it can also be samosas!
- I think the issue is ability to contact Council, I have sent several emails to Councillors with over a week turnaround, and this is not good enough.

What would encourage you to get involved?

- Go to the people
- Make it convenient
- Ageing population perception greater funds are spent on buildings for young not old, equalisation of disparity to a closer state
- Make it non-confrontational, setting up and us and them scenario vs. we are all one like sitting
 in circles works for the communities I am involved in
- Trust that my response will be heard
- Engage with your neighbourhood houses we have the people!
- There was a disability forum and no proper access or ramp...it certainly discouraged attendance from disability reps
- Different ways of contributing not just in a group setting which can be intimidating
- Trust that my response will be counted.
- Less intimidating application process
- Not tokenistic diversity
- Make a change for my community
- Maybe Council to reach out to Faith Centres
- Make it convenient with options of F2F, technology, timing

Topic 3: Successful community engagement





What does successful community engagement look like?

- When diverse representation is used to make a genuine difference
- Access, inclusion, transparency
- Communication about the outcome and how the community input influenced the decision
- Messaging and communication
- Participation by the communities on an ongoing basis with leadership being a two way basis.
- A love of Interculturalism and different cultures being given access to learn about each other
- That what the community recommends actually occurs.

What does Council need to do to improve its consultation and engagement with you and the broader community?

- Get out there more
- That what the community recommends actually occurs.
- Important to identify and acknowledge the diversity of the community and participants
- Identify community leaders who can reach out to niche groups
- Use all available resources including internal Council staff resources and networks
- How do they choose those diverse groups, I suppose it is up to the relevant staff person
- Identify community leaders that can reach out to niche cohorts
- In the past, community engagement was superficial and the community was not empowered to make or influence the decision
- Going through the motions budget submissions ignored
- I'd like to see the Council develop a community ambassador program so that it is easier to reach harder to reach cohorts

Council often has to make decisions on items where the community has many differing views. What would make you feel confident and satisfied with the process even if maybe the outcome or decision isn't what you wanted?

- That it is seen that Council actually listened. And give appropriate feedback as to how the decision was made
- Results of the engagement made public





Topic 4: Council's community engagement principles and commitment

Sam presented and outlined the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 community engagement principles as well as Council's principles and commitment and invited participants to comment

Principles	Our Commitment
A genuine opportunity to shape the way our local government works (respectful)	We set clear parameters for our engagements to ensure participants have clear expectations of what they can influence and how their feedback will be used.
Focused on providing input to solving challenges (action oriented)	We recognise that community feedback and input will create better decisions.
Representative (focused on justice and equity)	We ensure all community members have opportunities to contribute and benefit, no matter where they live, preferences, abilities and cultures. We recognise there are barriers for some groups and will use novel methods, and build our relationships across our community, to reduce those barriers and ensure everyone's right to be heard.
Build on our relationships with the community which are essential to trust in our work	We value the insights of our community and respect the time and effort they give towards informing our decision making.
Accessible, easy, and enjoyable (inclusive)	We focus on short, productive sessions that are enjoyable, culturally relevant, and meaningful experiences. We want those involved to learn about complex issues, hear a range of perspectives, and have their own experiences and needs heard.
Fed back to the community (integrity)	We are committed to sharing the findings with participants and to ensuring our decisions are reported back widely to the community.

- Representative: disagree, doesn't matter where they live. Not just going through the motions
- Action-oriented: Action plan will show how Council will do it
- Inclusive: Make it accessible do short productive sessions. Include real-life examples with descriptions, need to be useful and understood. Sometimes Council officers forget we are volunteers, lack of time to respond, allow time for feedback
- Integrity: How the feedback is used and the solutions these are key points.
- That it is seen that Council actually listened. And give appropriate feedback as to how the decision was made





Do you support and agree with the principles and commitments?

Response option	Number
A. Yes	6
B. No	2
C. Unsure	2
No response	7 (includes facilitators and Darebin staff)

Are there any other principles or commitments that Council should consider when consulting with the community?

- Yes, include children and young people.
- Offer job opportunities and like support to local community.
- Providing interpreters at meeting for CALD communities even if they have members who speak English.
- It is important to include in the policy time frames
- A useful start. What is disappointing is the imposition of State or Federal politics
- They are very nice, will action happen on them is my question.
- Importance of trust being two-way.
- Acting in good faith
- All age groups.
- Providing interpreters at meeting for CALD communities even if they have members who speak
 English

Other ideas and feedback

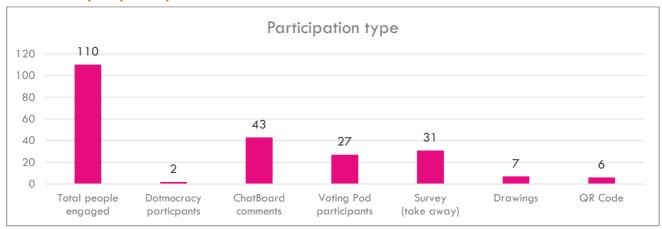
- Sometimes Council officers forget we are volunteers, lack of time to respond, allow time for feedback, not everyone is an expert in the subject
- Fear of COVID outdoor gathering must be superior to inside. Place where people can gather such as market and central places, car parks at Town Hall, railway station, convert into a city square
- There has been limited Councillor involvement and presence
- To show there has been a genuine and transparent process identify the community's interests, have an open process not necessarily the loudest but that all voices get heard – that is important – if they will be affected or impacted by decision
- If Council staff wish to talk further regarding community consultation with Neighbourhood Houses in Darebin they are more than welcome to attend our regular monthly Neighbourhood House Managers meetings. They can contact me manager@spanhouse.org - Our meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month. Next one is the 16th February. Colleen.
- Can we have a copy of the workshop presentation?
- Have a timing on feedback when people communicate with Council e.g. 48 hours even if they have not completed the enquiry
- What methods of access will the community and its members have for their input on an ongoing basis?





4. Place-based drop in engagements

Overall drop-in participation



Pop-Up 1

Participation	
Number of CEP surveys completed at pop-up?	22
Number of CEP surveys distributed with reply paid envelopes?	25
Number of scans of survey QR code (if known)?	5 (approx.)
Number of voting pod participants (approx.)	14
Numbers of dotmocracy participants?	2
Number of Chatboard Comments: How would you like Council to engage with you for future projects?	30
Number of Chatboard Comments: What does good community engagement look like?	7
Number of creative response drawings?	0
Number of General Customer Request forms filled in?	0
Number of speech bubble chat board photos?	0
Approximate number of people engaged overall? (approx.)	60





Voting Pod results: Have you provided your feedback and ideas on any Council Project in the past 2 years?							
YES NO UNSIRE							
Under 17	18+	Under 17	18+	Under 17	18+		
5	1	2	5	1	0		
TOTAL: 14							

Chatboard 1: How would you like Council to engage with you for future projects?					
Transparent	Email, e-news				
Pop-Ups ✓ ✓	Not on Facebook				
Hard copy Able to call/speak to someone to follow u feedback					
Instagram polls (teenagers)	Online involvement				
Sign a submission Coming out in parks etc					
Social media	Social clubs				
Word of mouth-local businesses tell us Letterbox drop/no internet					
Schools	Libraries				
ibraries Through technology					
An app Instagram					
In person at shopping centres	Through school (teachers or leadership program)				
Text Email					
Phone	Letterbox				
Insta, insta polls, ads Respond individually, not a group worksho					
Facebook or email	Survey and options for follow up phone conversation if want				









Chatboard 2 comments: What does successful community engagement look like?						
See the results of the feedback and the	Not just on Facebook √					
decision	1401 Just Ott i acebook +					
You see the end result actions ✓	Closing the loop contacting us about the decision ✓					
Able to follow issue over time to see what's						
happening and alerted when it's Council	I want online, but not everyone does.					
meeting or action happening						
Inclusive						



Dotmocracy results: How important are the following commitments to the community to you?										
Principle	Very Unimportant		Unimpo	rtant	Neutral		Importo	ınt	Very importo	ınt
	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over	Under	Over
	12	13	12	13	12	13	12	13	12	13
Respectful										2
Action								1		1
Justice and										2
equity										
Trust								2		
Inclusive								1		1
Integrity								1		1
SUB TOTALS								5		7
TOTAL	0		0		0		5		7	













Pop-Up 2

Participation	
Number of CEP surveys completed at pop-up?	34
Number of CEP surveys distributed with reply paid envelopes?	6
Number of scans of survey QR code (if known)?	1 (approx.)
Number of voting pod participants (approx.)	13
Numbers of dotmocracy participants?	0
Number of Chatboard Comments: How would you like Council	6
to engage with you for future projects?	0
Number of Chatboard Comments: What does good community	0
engagement look like?	•
Number of creative response drawings?	7
Number of General Customer Request forms filled in?	1
Appearance release forms	16
Number of speech bubble chat board photos?	0
Approximate number of people engaged overall? (approx.)	50





Voting Pod results: Have you provided your feedback and ideas on any Council Project in the past 2 years?					
Y	ES	NO		UNSIRE	
Under 17	18+	Under 17	18+	Under 17	18+
1	1	5	3	3	0
TOTAL: 13					

Chatboard 1: How would you like Council to engage with you for future projects?			
How would you like Council to engage with you for future projects?			
Ged Kerney and Council newsletters	Regular e-news with opportunities to participate		
Workshops at schools	Email		
Regular, consistent pop-ups (Edwardes Street)	An app you can check to see what projects are happening		



Chatboard 2 comments: What does successful community engagement look like?		
No comments received		





Photos

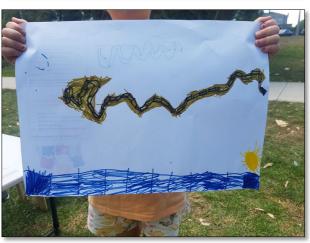






















5. Children's Workshops

Workshop 1		Workshop 2	
Date	21 Jan 2021	Date	21 Jan 2021
Time	10.30am — 12pm	Time	2pm — 3.30pm
Venue	Bundoora Park Farm	Venue	Kingsbury Primary School Holiday Program
Attendees	9 - Aged between (5-11)	Attendees	21 - (Aged between 5-11)

Purpose of the workshops:





To obtain input and feedback from children about how they would like to be engaged to inform the development of Darebin Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Activity 1 - Setting the scene (Local Government)









The first section of the workshop was about 'setting the scene' in relation to Local Government and ensuring the children understood the context to help them provided informed feedback.

The children were facilitated through a discussion involving questions like:

- Do you know what Council is or what they do?
- Do you know what local Council area you live in or what it is called?
- How does local Government work and who makes all the decisions?

The children were then asked to think about what services Council provides through a Dotmocracy activity and then to relate those services to what they and their families might use.













Activity 2 – What do you love about Darebin?





The children were then asked what they loved about their neighbourhood / Darebin and to write their answer on a love heart.

The most common responses were:

- Parks, nature 8
- Sporting activities 7
- Video games 6
- Shops/restaurants 6
- Pets − 6

Responses	Responses	
Going to the park	Park	
Love the nature there, video game	The creek	
Basketball	Games, pancakes, my cat	
Bike riding	The crazy sheet and nature parks, I love	
bike fiding	Minecraft	
Bike riding	McDonald's, watching TV	
McDonald's, Coles, nice place	Asian market, woollies, pizza hut, petrol station	
Going to gymnastics	McDonald's, petrol station, tennis, basketball,	
	school	
Spending time with my cat	Playing games, basketball, McDonald's	
I love going to WaterMarc	Spending time with my cat	
Playing games, eating hot food	Playing games, watching TV, McDonald's	
I like my school the park and the area	Lidere garden roof	
Creek	My dog	
I love playing with my friends and my school	My dog	
I love my dog		





Activity 3 - Engaging children in your neighbourhood

The next activity was designed to get the children to think about what they would like to have a say on, how and where they would like to be engaged and how they would like to provide feedback to Council.

Question 1 – If you were given \$20 million, how would you like to spend it on improving something in your neighbourhood?

Common responses include swimming pools, water parks, libraries, playgrounds, and rubbish bins to keep the area tidy.

Responses	Responses
Library, pool	Toy shop
Pool, park by house for poor people	House with a pool, Park
Making Nintendo hours at schools, farming, toys,	Give \$ to my parents
toys books, TVs	
Swimming pools, water parks, basketball	5 skyscrapers, 50 supermarkets
grounds, Roblox company	
Drink taps, public bins, treehouse, computer	Giant waterslide which has lots of fun,
	playgrounds, and lots of pools that open the
	whole night
Library, giant teddy, everything ok	A nursery that takes care of babies and plants
Swimming pools Water parks Basketball	Taps for drink, playground, library, hospital,
grounds Free Roblox company	water marc, public rubbish bins
Build a swimming pool on top of my house, New	Fix up and donate to Scout halls and schools
farm, Mansion Lamborghini, Water park	
Keeping the area tidy/ less rubbish	Safer roads
Playgrounds	Call their mum's phone

Question 2 – Before deciding how to spend your \$20 million, you have to first ask all the children in the neighbourhood what they think the money should be spent on. How would you go about doing that and where?

The most common response to this question was talking to children in person (9 responses) including door knocking, talking to children on the street, going around the neighbourhood and meetings. Other common responses included:

- Posters 6
- Letters 5
- Video games 5
- Social media 4
- News/newspapers 3





Responses	Responses
Send letters	Talk to children at the Library
Posters	Paper Iollies
Have a 1000 kid mideing (game shop)	Poster, speaker, Roblox, Instagram, Facebook
I would take a clipboard and get information	Calling them, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat,
about who wants to do it and who doesn't	make a video and send it to them
Communicate via Roblox	Newspapers
Ring their doorbells for suggestions	Toys, phone, poster
Put it on the newspaper	Letter
Roblox chat, Wechat, discord, Google meet	Draw a picture
Community pools on Minecraft	Voice message
In person	In a meeting
Tell parents	Make a poster
Letterbox drop	I would go walking in the street saying would
	you like to improve anything
Have a vote	Knock on doors
Make my parents email everyone's parents and	Go around the neighbourhood and ask them to
ask their kids	rate ideas
Posters in shops	Letterbox drop
In the mail	On the street with a clipboard and questionnaire
The news	Social media, Ipads
The mall	

Question 3 – Now that you have spoken to all the children in your neighbourhood, how can they provide you with their feedback and ideas?

Responses to this were similar to the previous question and included things like:

- Write a letter
- Answer a survey or questionnaire
- Take a vote
- Send an email
- Respond via social media / video game groups/ chats





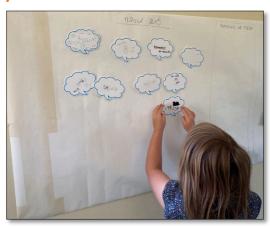
Activity 4 - Mayor for the Day (putting engagement to the test)

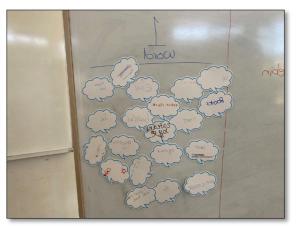
Using the Darebin Community Vision Creative Drawing Sheet, children were asked to draw what they would do or change if they were Mayor for the day. This was followed by many participants presenting their ideas back to the workshop groups (Council has collected drawings to be inputted into the Darebin Vision data).





Activity 5 - One word





The final workshop activity involved asking the children to write one word onto a cloud speech bubble that described their neighbourhood in 20 years' time – in 2041. (This data has also been captured to feed into the Darebin Vision process).

The most common responses included:

- A place that was nice/helpful and caring 7
- A happy place 7
- A safe place 6
- A green/ natural place 4





Responses	Responses	Responses
Beautiful	Нарру	Нарру
Safe	Fun	Cool
Safe and Joy	To be kind	Explore space
Нарру	To be nice	Happy safe
Smart	Sunny	Bananaeats
Not polluted	Happy and safe	More nature
Нарру	Ве	Books
Helpful	Safe	Clean
Nice	Caring	Environmental
Road safety	Peaceful	Nice

